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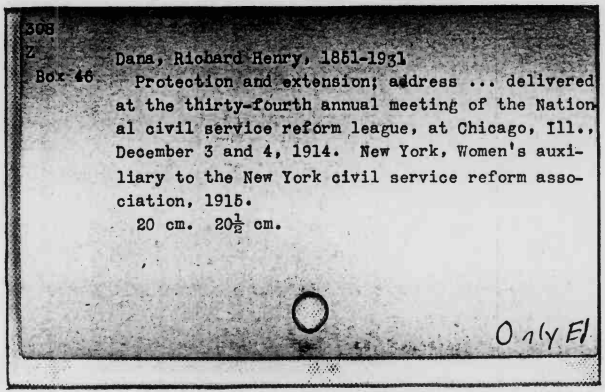
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Address by

Richard Henry Dana

President of the National Civil Service
Reform League

Delivered at the Thirty-fourth Annual Meeting
of the
NATIONAL CIVIL SERVICE REFORM LEAGUE
At CHICAGO, ILL.
December 3 and 4, 1914

PUBLISHED FOR THE
WOMEN'S AUXILIARY
TO THE
NEW YORK CIVIL SERVICE REFORM
ASSOCIATION
79 WALL STREET, NEW YORK CITY
1915

Protection and Extension

RICHARD HENRY DANA, PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL CIVIL SERVICE REFORM LEAGUE

We have now completed one-third of a century of our existence as a League since its organization at Newport, Rhode Island, in August, 1881, and it seems not inappropriate that at this point in our history we should hold our annual meeting in Chicago, which in civil service reform matters, as doubtless in some others, is in advance of other parts of United States and perhaps of the whole world.

The work of the League seems to divide itself into two parts, one protection, the other extension: the protection of what we have got and the extension of the merit system to positions now outside the safe fold, and the perfecting of that which is within. Protection from evasion, substraction and the infusion of politics while necessary and likely to occupy our attention for a long time to come and is of itself a justification for our continued existence, is not so inspiring a kind of work as extension. This extension includes enlargement of both sideways and upwards. It is on this extension that I should like here and now to put special emphasis.

The whole civil service of the federal government today includes about 475,000 persons with an aggregate total salary estimated at $400,000,000 a year. Of this number of persons with the enormous salary only 61% is under the strict competitive merit system. Adding to the federal service that of the cities, counties, and states within the boundary of our great country, we have a grand total of at least 800,000 appointees, and it is very likely to be over 900,000 with an aggregate annual salary of not less than $700,000,000. By far the greater part of this enormous salary fund and this army of public employees is still in politics, unprotected by civil service rules or laws, and is used to build up a great political machine. Moreover, the proportion of the higher offices that are under the civil service rules is much smaller than the proportion of the middle-grade places. That is, our extensions have been mostly sideways heretofore, and only to a small degree, and that of late years, has any extension been made upward. The result of this state of affairs is that the political "boss" has not only a great mass of middle and lower grade places still in his possession, but the most lucrative appointments are almost all at his disposal to be used as rewards for partisan work, and furthermore, by his control over these higher positions, over the heads of municipal, county, and state departments, he is able to give contracts and the sale of supplies to political favorites or party contributors, and to discriminate against those who are not. It is this lordship over this great army of political appointees with all the rich perquisites that accompany the higher places that gives the "boss" his continued hold over caucuses, primaries, conventions, and even elections, and which in turn give him so much control over legislatures and executives, used often against the best wishes of the people and to the great waste of public money raised by taxation. He is still able to build and man baronial fortresses on the hills of politics.

Though the diminution of the power of the party "boss" by taking patronage out of his hands and bringing back to the plain people the control of their representatives are the chief motives that have inspired civil service reformers from the beginning, yet apart from this, and hardly less in importance, is the desire to check the demoralization in the public service that follows the unregulated system of appointment. Not only is there incompetence in all such middle grade and minor positions as are still filled by political influence, but more harmful incompetence among those who are to direct the operating departments of government, those who are in charge of the health, safety, happiness, and even lives of the people. Where we ought to have the best experts obtainable, we find unfit persons spending much of their time in politics and doing all they can even where the middle and lower service under their direction is within the merit system, to inject politics into their departments. We see for example a position dealing with engineering problems filled by an ex-bartender with only a grammar school education, whose only engineering experience is engineering the cam-

paign of the mayor who appointed him. The result of all this is such inefficient and even total absence of enforcement of beneficent laws, that the public is robbed of the protection relating to pure food, milk supply, tenement and lodging houses, fire prevention, safety in factories and theatres and the like, or of the benefits that would come from good management of water supplies, building and repair of public roads and streets, and the operation of the rapidly growing number of public activities of various sorts. The waste of the public money by inefficiency has again and again been shown by capable investigators to be far greater than that which is lost by various kinds of graft, and when we speak of the loss of public money we think not only of the taxpayers but what appeals to us all with even far greater force is the loss to the people at large and especially to the poorer classes who are unable to protect themselves. Our cities say that they can not afford a sufficient number of well-regulated playgrounds to keep the boys off the streets and out of mischief and to teach them self-reliance and improve their health. The cities say they have no money to prevent blindness and crippling lameness at birth among the poor or to employ competent nurses, physicians, and oculists in the public schools to prevent the spread of contagious diseases, injury to eye-sight or to health, and can not furnish visiting nurses in the homes of the needy or give sufficient supply of milk to the babies of the poor in the hot months of the year. They can not afford various kinds of education that will better prepare our young men and women to become useful and productive citizens. Whence comes this woeful want except it be from the wanton waste of injecting politics into municipal administration and especially among the business managers, as it were, of present municipal undertakings? Is there not something pitiable about this want of means to save life, to decrease illness, and to improve the health and morals of the coming generation? I venture to say that there is enough wasted and stolen to pay for the greater portion of these needed things. I do not believe the good natured party boss himself realizes how he is stealing by his inefficient government from his fellow men and women, and above all from

the young, the poor and the helpless. A plan that will insure capable experts, independent of politics, in the positions to direct city operations is emphatically, is it not, the remedy of remedies? The modern scholar of municipal government is pointing out to us that it is only those municipalities which make use of these high-grade experts in their management and which give these experts considerable power over operative details, such as we find in Paris and the cities of Germany and England, that one sees economic, efficient and honest government.

As Mr. A. Lawrence Lowell, President of Harvard University, said a year ago "we want to emphasize the importance of having permanent officials in higher grades of the service. * * * The higher discretionary officers —all those who are not at the very top of the system, all those who do not decide political questions, must eventually be experts. Not until we do that can we possibly build up a really efficient, strong, vigorous, and lasting civil service and if we can not do that, let us face boldly the fact that no democracy that has not succeeded in doing it, has ever lasted for more than three or four generations."

In the experimental period covering the first two or three years of the merit system in the United States that system was chiefly applied to clerks, policemen, and firemen, and the examinations consisted chiefly of written questions and answers of the rather scholastic type, combined with physical tests and investigation of character for the policemen and firemen. Soon after, the system began to be extended to a greater variety of employments and much ingenuity was devised in adapting tests to secure fitness and the examinations soon dealt with many questions beyond the scholastic, and investigations into experience formed an important part of the system. It is only, however, for the last fifteen years that the system has been directed to the selection of high-grade experts. During these latter years civil and sanitary, hydraulic and road engineers, supervising architects, physicians, chemists, botanists, assistant solicitors, superintendents of streets, chief librarians, heads of bureaus, city auditors, building inspectors in chief, heads of municipal departments and various other men of scientific or special training and ex-

perience and executive and organizing ability and high professonal standing with salaries even as large as $10,000 a year have been obtained through the civil service examinations. How is this possible? It is possible because the word "examination" in the civil service is coming to have a meaning far broader than that which is associated with school and college work. The examinations for these high positions consist not of the usual questions and answers of candidates gathered in one room but of inquiry addressed to the candidates and to those who have employed them as to what education, training and experience these candidates have had, their achievements in life, and manifestations of executive and organizing ability and power to get on with and handle men. This inquiry is conducted by the aid of appropriate specialists of eminence who patriotically give their service either gratuitously or for a nominal consideration. To this inquiry is added a thesis on the conduct of the work to be done in the position sought, while the thesis and the experience statements are made at the homes or offices of the candidates. Sometimes an oral interview to ascertain personality is employed. The grading, based on all this information, is left to the jury of these specialist-examiners.

It is such an up-to-date method that is called the "unassembled investigation of careers" that forms the clue for taking the expert positions out of politics.

Perhaps one of the most difficult things to be accomplished in a democratic government is to educate the public to demand that which is for its own good and the most difficult branch of this difficult task is to enlarge a conception once publicly received. The general conception of the civil service system was formed throughout the country in the first one or two years of the trial period, already mentioned, and even professors and ex-professors of government in our universities, contributing but not very active members of our civil service reform associations, and even state governors, who have given much encouragement to civil service legislation, have not enlarged the original idea.

The complex, as the psychologists call it, I believe, that is stimulated by the words "civil service reform" in the

minds of many of our fellow citizens is that of a clerical examination and when a suggestion is made of extending the system upward to high positions controlling large operative undertakings by government, this old complex rightly compels any sane man to reject the proposition.

It is, therefore, our duty now to suggest a true, enlarged, and up-to-date complex to take the place of the old narrow, at one time true but no longer correct, one. We ought to have a Charles Lamb who, with his wit and charm, would expose the fallacy that so hinders our upward progress. Every method known to business for ascertaining the relative ability of various candidates for various kinds and grades of work that is capable of being systematized, that is, every method except that of pure favoritism, can be and is employed by the civil service commissions. Laborers are graded according to age, health, and physical ability. Bench tests are employed in selecting skilled mechanics; physical competition for policemen and firemen; even saddling, mounting, riding horses and firing from horseback have formed part of the civil service examination for the United States forest rangers. Architectural and topographical draftsmen are tested by two days' work of the very kind they would have to do when employed and the results are examined by architects and topographical engineers respectively, and indeed there are seven or eight hundred varieties of examinations furnishing separate eligible lists. Considering that it is only a few years ago that it was declared on the floor of Congress in public debate that there was only one kind of examination for all positions, it becomes necessary for us thus to explain publicly and at length the adaptability of the system, in order that we may accomplish the beneficent extension of which it is capable.

While this up-to-date method of selecting experts, that I have described, has to be used when a new bureau is established or there are not assistant experts suitable for promotion, yet in many cases it is rather promotion from among the assistant experts who have entered through civil service examination than even this successful and enlightened method that will be used and this is especially so in large branches of the service where no scientific

education is required. The postmasters, collectors of customs and internal revenue, ten thousand in number, require nothing more than ordinary school education plus a varied experience in their departments and all those positions can be filled by promotion alone. Our League has decided to make it its next chief endeavor to arouse public opinion to induce Congress to pass such legislation as will enable the higher grade postmasters to be brought within the classified service, and we appeal to boards of trade, chambers of commerce, civic organizations, the General Federation of Women's Clubs, and indeed to all persons who use the mails, for moral and financial support to enable us to carry on such a campaign of publicity as is required. We also appeal to the many young men of the country who would gladly render public service were there a career open for them, but who now see that all these high positions are filled by political outsiders, so they are either discouraged from entering the service at all or else stay in it only till they have shown a sufficient capacity and ability to succeed in getting a place in private business. There is not a Democratic as opposed to a Republican way of sorting letters. What the people want is that the mails shall be handled promptly and accurately. If we succeed in this plan, the country will have a great body of trained expert postmasters and from among them material could be found to furnish experts suitable for superintendents of divisions. At present there are no such officials and the postoffices are not divided into districts as is the case in every other civilized country in the world of any size whatsoever, and as is the case of any large and extended business, such as the railroads, telegraph, telephone, and express companies. One objection to adopting this system of division, which has been recommended by one postmaster-general after another, is that there are not experts in the country to fill these positions, and there are not experts because the postmasters themselves are not experts.

Moreover, we have found by investigation that many of the postmasters, collectors, marshals, etc., though paid far more than their subordinates who give all their working time, themselves only give one hour a day or one day a

week to the duties of the office and spend the rest of the time either in politics or outside private business.

One does not like to be constantly decrying one's own country and yet the postal experts, and there are some in our country, are, I am told, unanimous in declaring that our postal service is far below the postal service of any other civilized nation that has anything like the standing of our country in the world, and that until our people realize its deficiencies our postal service will never be properly developed.

With reference to the political activity, these unclassified postmasters of the first, second, and third class, that is, all with salaries above a thousand dollars a year, are considered the regular political agents of members of Congress and form the great nucleus of party workers that have such an influence in the presidential convention, usually as delegates, to support the administration in its efforts to seek renomination; a sort of Pretorian Guard that holds the succession up at auction as in Imperial Rome. By putting at the head of each flock of competitive civil servants in the postoffices these political hirelings, it is no wonder that it makes it difficult to arrange promotions and dismissals on a basis of merit or to prevent underhanded attempts at forcing political contributions from the employees and otherwise evading both the spirit and the letter of the civil service laws, in the postoffices under them.

Let us suppose some great business concern with branches in every city and town, and let us suppose that its board of directors while taking great care to select capable clerks, bookkeepers and messengers, should let members of Congress in the district select its local managers, who in turn would do the political work for those Congressmen and who would be changed every time a new Congressman was chosen, or a new party came in power at Washington. Should we not think that the directors had lost their wits and were candidates for a lunatic asylum?

As against the extension of the merit system upward is President Wilson's statement in signing the urgent Deficiency Bill with its rider that took the deputy collectors

of internal revenue and deputy marshals out of classified civil service. He said such officials "were never intended to be included in the ordinary provisions of the civil service law." Such a statement from so high an authority ought not to go unchallenged. Just what is meant by "ordinary" it is hard to say. If it is meant that the provisions applied to clerks and copyists have to be modified when applied to deputy collectors and deputy marshals just as they have to be modified for filling very many other positions, and if these modifications are frequently and successfully used, it would furnish no reason for exempting these deputies. If, however, the President means that the civil service law was never intended to cover such positions, as a broad general statement, he was badly advised.

Mr. Dorman B. Eaton, the father of the present civil service law, in his book "Civil Service in Great Britain" written just before our law was passed, showed that in that country not only deputies but even collectors themselves were classified, and the first annual report of the civil service commission, of which Mr. Eaton was chairman, specifically stated that the United States civil service system was capable of being extended all the way up to and including collectors of internal revenue, collectors of customs, postmasters, marshals, etc.

The speech of that great Democratic Senator, Pendleton of Ohio, in debate on the bill, put the limit of extensions only to those higher officials to whom we entrust the determination of public policies and no one would claim that deputy collectors are in this class. In addition, in 1896, when these deputies were first included within the law, the United States civil service commission recommended and urged their inclusion, and the attorney-general, in a careful opinion, sustained the legality of the plan. After all, however, it is not so much a question as to what was the original intention. If the law intended to include them and the attempt to include them had failed, the original intention would avail little, and if, on the contrary, the inclusion had succeeded the "never intended" would be but a poor excuse for taking them out now. What, then, has been the experience? After they were

included under the civil service law by President Cleveland, the Secretary of the Treasury officially stated that more revenue was collected at less expense than ever before, and the civil service commission experienced no difficulty in getting good men for the places. Later these officials were taken out of the classified service by order of President McKinley. The cost again increased under the patronage administration of these places. Again in 1906 the deputies were put back under the merit system by order of President Roosevelt and again the efficiency increased to such an extent that, as stated officially by the revenue department, the collections increased 120% and the cost per $100 collected decreased 39%. We should also note that just about half the deputy collectors taken out by the rider are mere office clerks given the title of "deputy" so as to be enabled to administer oaths under the revenue law.

The reason advanced for unclassifying these positions by President McKinley was that a collector should be free to "select his deputy from men he knows and trusts." The trouble under the patronage system is that the collector is *not*, in fact, "free" so to select his deputies. Let me give an illustration. In the Boston district the collector of internal revenue, not long after he had selected his deputies by the so-called "free" method, was having one of them indicted for misfeasance in office. When asked how he had so failed in his choice of a man, he said that he never knew the deputy before he appointed him but that he had to take those recommended by the Congressmen. This was under the Republican administration of President McKinley. Already under the present Democratic administration one of the deputy collectors, appointed under the "free" system in the state of Indiana, has been indicted, convicted and dismissed for impersonation of another, and more than one collector has complained of the poor material he had had to take in the way of deputies from the members of Congress of his party. Again every exemption of higher grade places makes it harder to get as good a class of men to enter the lower positions, because they are cut off from rising by promotion to these better exempted positions, and again when more places are filled by

political influence there is a tendency to bring the rest of the service under politics. In England the whole internal revenue service is permanent and well trained. It is recruited with young men who enter the lower executive grades through competition and are then eligible to promotion through all the intermediate grades to the collectorships.

One of the chief reasons that decided President Roosevelt to reclassify the deputies was that the selection of these deputies was proved in some cases and suspected in others to have been turned over to the very liquor and tobacco interests that were to be inspected, mainly because of large political contributions to the party in power.

Civil service reformers have often been called well-meaning "theorists." Over forty years of observation, often at close quarters, has led me to believe, and the public is now taking the same view, that those who talk about "confidential" positions and "freedom to select" are the theorists while the civil service reformers are the practical men dealing with the hard facts of experience.

As an excuse for the raids on the classified civil service by Congress, it has several times been repeated in debate that "90% of all the offices are filled by Republicans." No proof of this has been offered and no statistics can be found. It is undoubtedly a great exaggeration. It must be remembered that during both administrations of President Cleveland large numbers of Democrats were covered in, probably one-fifth of all put in by executive orders as distinct from growth. It should also be remembered that during the last two years and four months of President Roosevelt's administration and during the whole of President Tafts' two out of the three civil service commissioners were Democrats, so that no injustice is likely to have been done the members of that party during this period. As to selections from the eligible lists, in the case of rural carriers and fourth-class postmasters, until recently only one eligible was certified for each vacancy; while in many postoffices, custom houses, and departments at Washington it has been customary to take the eligibles in the order in which they stood—a custom which should be encouraged. The apportionment among the various states required for the departments at Washington has insured to those states where the Democrats represent the most education a large representation for that party.

After all the members of the classified service, being debarred from political activity both by rule and as a natural consequence of their independence of tenure and being free from political assessments, are, for political purposes, "dead wood," and it is no more advantage to one party or the other, than that so many Republicans or Democrats happen to be in the employ of a railroad, banking house, or department store.

What we believe to be a backward step has been taken in the postoffice department. The framers of our civil service law, well aware that under the spoils system members of Congress were the dispensers of the patronage of office, foresaw that in giving the choice for each vacancy between the three highest eligibles on the list, Congressmen might again interfere in appointments under the law. Therefore, in addition to the provisions against the exercise of political influence, section 10 was put in, which says that "no recommendation which may be given by any Senator or member of the House of Representatives, except as to character or residence of the applicant shall be received or considered by any person concerned in making any . . . appointment under this act."

We regret to say that the postmaster-general has publicly solicited the recommendations of members of Congress in the appointment of eligibles after examination to the positions of fourth-class postmasters. This is a practically vulnerable point in the armor of the merit system. For other positions the eligible lists are usually so long that the chance of a political favorite's coming in the highest three is extremely small, but for the fourth-class postmasters there are, on the average, not over three eligibles for each office. Therefore a recommendation by a Congressman as to which should be selected is, in most instances, practically giving the appointment to him, limited only by the ability of his candidate to pass the examination. This policy of considering congressional recommendations was not only openly declared by Postmaster-General Burleson, but in the official notices posted up in

every one of the fourth-class postoffices, in which examinations were to be held, it was re-stated. The attention of both the Postmaster-General and President Wilson was called to this breach of the law and the danger to the merit system involved. The Postmaster-General replied that "Section 10 of the civil service law is intended to prohibit the consideration of recommendations from Congress based not on the qualifications or fitness of the applicant but on their political affiliations, and I hold it to be no violation of this provision to give consideration to any pertinent information relative to applicants furnished by members of Congress, not in their capacity as members of a political party, but as representatives of their districts and of the postal communities interested in the service."

Under such a loose construction of the statute a judge who is, by law, prohibited from sitting in a case in which he has any interest, might ignore the law, giving as his reason that he was not to sit in his capacity as a party interested but as an impartial judge.

A member of Congress is by no means a disinterested adviser. It is to his advantage to have in every small town within his district a local agent paid by the government. Not only is this dangerous in the very numerous cases of appointments to the fourth-class postoffices, but it sets a precedent sanctioned by the administration for injecting politics into the very heart of the merit system itself. Heretofore we have had the merit system, impartial, fair and just, on the one hand, and as a contrast, the spoils system on the other, partisan, selfish, and based on favoritism. Postal communities are allowed to file objections to the personality of eligibles with the Civil Service Commission which institutes an investigation and if the objections were reasonable that eligible is dropped.

We asked to have the legality of this practice submitted to the Attorney General for his opinion, but this request was not granted. Last April we applied to the Civil Service Commission for full information as to how often the first eligible was passed over for the second or third in the appointment of fourth-class postmasters, but we have not yet been able to obtain that information "owing to congestion of work in the office." I might add that the chairman told us he did not consider the Postmaster-General's acts any breach of section 10.

The Civil Service Commission last spring and summer was indeed congested with the work of holding examinations for 21,000 fourth-class postoffices in all parts of the country, but we submit that it is extremely important to give publicity to all their proceedings. We offered our help in looking over their records. We do not charge the able and high-minded men on the Commission with forgetting that it is the duty of the Civil Service Commission to protect the public service from politics rather than to shelter a political party from criticism; but as a civil service commission ought not only to do right but, like Caesar's wife, ought to be free from suspicion, therefore we believe it would have been wiser to have postponed one examination a few days and to have given the information on this important subject. We still hope that this information may be made public hereafter.

The special exceptions to the civil service law and rules made by executive orders of the President of the United States in behalf of individuals, during the last year, have equalled the average number for the twelve years past. The report of the Council deals with these in detail. In general about one-quarter of these seventy-one cases are justifiable; about one-quarter are doubtful; and one-half are on a purely charitable basis, and made without the approval of the Civil Service Commission to whom the President submits favored cases for report before his final action.

Many of the justifiable ones are cases of extending the one-year limit on reappointment. Let me cite two types: one that of a faithful and efficient public servant who resigned on account of illness which continued more than a year but from which he is now fully recovered; the other, the female who resigned to marry but whose husband has died and left her penniless after the year limit has expired.

It is well for our Council to keep an eye on special exceptions and comment on them publicly, but is it not of still greater importance to call public attention to the whole method of granting these exceptions? This method seems

wholly wrong. It is now on an "Arabian Nights" basis. Only those who get the ear of the Caliph have a chance and if they get the ear of the Grand Vizier also they receive too much rather than too little favor. This "Arabian Nights" system has two evils:

First, there are hundreds, perhaps thousands, who have equal if not greater justice in their claims who never get the ear of the President and are shut off from all remedy; and secondly, those who get his ear take far too much of his time. We therefore again recommend that all claims not purely charitable should be made directly to the Civil Service Commission which should investigate them and be empowered, under general regulations, to grant those that are meritorious; its finding in each case, as at present, to be printed in its annual report.

Now let us consider the purely charity cases for new appointment from outside that so appeal to the heart of one president after another. If those charitable applicants that now get his ear are to be given public office, why in our country of equal chance for all should not every needy person have an equal opportunity? Would it not be well, then, to open Red Cross or charity organizations to investigate the needs of *all* such applications? And I should suggest also that such charitable board should investigate all those on the eligible lists of the Civil Service Commission and see if there are not some of them quite as much in need who may have widowed mothers to support and young fatherless brothers and sisters to educate whose father perhaps was an old soldier or former employee, especially as such eligibles are doubtless far better qualified for the position sought than the outside applicant.

This idea of opening up the whole civil service to charity appointment would doubtless fill all the vacancies for years to come and discourage any one from taking the examinations of the Civil Service Commission. But what of that? If the principle is right for some twenty or thirty preferred persons a year, why not for thousands of others equally or more deserving and in equal or greater need? This *reductio ad absurdum* seems to point the way to an executive order providing that no claims for charity appointment from outside shall be considered by the President or the Commission under any circumstances whatsoever.

Let us consider the perfecting of the service itself. In addition to securing a supply of efficient persons for entrance into the public service it is also necessary to see that those persons who are covered into the service from political appointments are up to standard and doing their work properly, and also that the more efficient ones selected through the civil service system keep up to a high standard of meritorious work. When meritorious work is done it should be rewarded by the proper promotion, either immediate or in prospect. Also it is more and more evident that in the public service generally it is necessary to standardize work and pay, to prevent duplication between the different departments on the one hand, and on the other, to fill up gaps and omissions.

Now to the civil service reformers of the city of Chicago is due the credit of solving these last problems. The admirable plan of an efficiency bureau connected with the Civil Service Commission to do all those things which have just been enumerated has been put in operation. Efficiency experts and engineers have been employed, great economies have resulted, and better and more work is done for the public at less cost. Already some municipalities and the national government have followed the steps of our Chicago friends by appointing efficiency bureaus, and in the national government, though we are not able to report in detail, the Commission is taking great interest and pride in the work that it is accomplishing in these ways.

The difficult question of how to secure removals enough of the kind that are needed, without increasing removals for political reasons has been largely solved through the work of this efficiency bureau and records kept under its supervision. There has been some difference in opinion, largely based, I believe, on misunderstandings, as to the merits of this Chicago removal system in all its parts, but this much will be said for it in practice, that through it a great many removals that should have been made but were not made, have now been secured. The procedure has been such as to satisfy those who have been removed,

their friends, and the public at large of substantial justice in each case, and all the employees have been braced up to doing their best by the appreciation of work that is good and the condemnation of that which is bad.

The attitude of the present administration is, on the whole, favorable to our cause. The civil service law and rules have been well sustained by the President and the Civil Service Commission, excepting for the matter of the fourth-class postmasters. The executive orders also providing for limited competition in the appointment of consuls and diplomatic secretaries have been adhered to with only five special exceptions made by the President, four being in favor of men qualified by experience and training, which cannot be said of the other. The President has not defended us from the attacks made in Congress in the way of riders to such bills as the tariff and urgent deficiency bills taking positions out of the classified civil service. The rider to the urgent deficiency bill has already been referred to. As to the others, I shall now speak with the privilege that the President of the League has of expressing his own opinion without committing the League itself. When the President was face to face with the tariff bill, the chief measure of his administration, I can appreciate the danger of sending back that bill with a veto to Congress. It might have involved a rediscussion of the schedules, and I can fully sympathize with, even if I do not fully approve of, the idea of not antagonizing the Democratic members of Congress, many of whom are brought up to consider that the public offices are the private property of the members, but I certainly believe that if the President had vetoed these various riders he would have had the full support of the country and even members of Congress would yield. No small number of Democratic members have voted against these riders, much to their credit, and the majorities in favor of them were small. There are many instances in which presidents have vetoed bills because of riders and in some instances because the riders were injurious to civil service reform, without delaying the passage of the bills more than a day or two and without breaking with the administration's party in Congress. As a general proposition Congress-

men have fallen into line, when they have been deprived of patronage, with wonderful amiability. Let me give two instances. When President Roosevelt classified a number of positions which Congress thought they had succeeded in taking out of the merit system Congress acquiesced without any signs of retaliation. The other instance is when Hon. Caroll D. Wright was placed in charge of the census bureau before it had been put under the civil service law. The late Senator Quay of Pennsylvania made his customary demand for appointments. Mr. Wright refused to comply, stating his reasons. Senator Quay then asked him if he were treating all members of Congress alike. Mr. Wright said that he was and when Senator Quay and the other Senators and Representatives found that Mr. Wright was consistent in his course he never failed to receive congressional support for all the appropriations that were needed. He told some of us personally that thereafter he had no better friend in Congress than Senator Quay himself. The people of the United States, too, are hero-worshipers at heart and admire courage in a president, and I should like to submit to the serious consideration of President Wilson himself whether he will not in the long run receive more support both from Congress and the public if he will hereafter resist every attack on the merit system and will make large extensions that are within his province and recommend to Congress others that require congressional action. A little yielding of patronage does not satisfy but rather whets the appetite of the politicians. We are glad to report publicly that the President has given his influence in preventing the passage of some other riders and bills dangerous to the service. Congressmen are beginning to learn that patronage is not a bed of roses without thorns. We specially hope that the President, the Postmaster-General and the Secretary of the Treasury will recommend to Congress legislation which will enable the presidential postmasters, collectors, and marshals to be put within the merit system.

It is gratifying to note the growing demand for experts in governmental work and for the need of putting those experts in the classified civil service, as shown at the meeting of the National Good Roads Congress at Atlanta and

the National Municipal League in Baltimore during the past month. Every year more and more such experts are chosen through the merit system and as a result more and more are the contracts taken out of politics and efficient administration secured, and more and more is the public being educated to the need of giving these experts full authority within their operative departments without interference from politics, excepting in the one matter of directing the general policies in order to carry out the wishes of the people, and we are more and more learning to rely on the advice of the trained experts to help the public in arriving at wise decisions.

Objection is often made that we can not make people good by legislation. Without entering the ethical discussion of the effect of environment upon character, knowing human nature as it is, is it not perfectly evident that the system that presents the greatest inducements to corruption with the least fear of detection and punishment is the system in which corruption will flourish in proportion to the opportunities given it? And, on the other hand, a system that makes vice difficult and virtue easy will in equal proportion increase the acts of virtue, if not virtue itself.

At the first meeting of the National Civil Service Reform League in 1881 the late George William Curtis, our then President, said:

"We have laid our hands on the barbaric palace of patronage, and begun to write on its wall, *'Mene, mene!'*

Nor, I believe, will the work end till they are laid in the dust."

The work has not ended. Indeed it is not yet half finished. The program is of progress both forwards and upwards, of diminishing the power of the political boss, of giving careers in public service to our young men, of securing intelligent expert management, of saving public money for extension of beneficent public work, of raising the morality of politics. Is not this enough to arouse us to renewed effort, with all our heart and soul and mind, while the growing support of our fellow citizens fills us with fresh hope and enthusiasm?

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